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January 26, 1950

Dear Mr. President:

Here is a suggested letter to Selwyn Lloyd,  
together with the enclosed memorandum.

I think it useful to get our thinking on these  
particular points quickly to the attention of Selwyn and  
Harold in view of the trip they contemplate.

Faithfully yours,



John Foster Dulles

Enclosures:  
As stated.

The President,  
The White House.

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SUGGESTED LETTER

Dear Selwyn:

I greatly appreciate your candid and illuminating "talking-out-loud" piece. This sort of thinking is the best, though still inadequate, substitute for talking face to face. Permit me to indulge in some counterpart thinking out loud on one or two aspects of this problem. They are put down in the enclosed memorandum.

I do not at this time comment on the German attitude because that involves matters where my mind is by no means clear. I am inclined to think that Adenauer and his associates have not been thinking very constructively, or perhaps considered adequately, how to use the asset which they possess in the attraction of the freedoms and industrial vitality of the Federal Republic. I understand that they have a group working on this matter now.

As far as the "Napacki Plan" projects are concerned, these involve military considerations which I do not have clearly in mind at the moment.

Sincerely yours,



1/20/59

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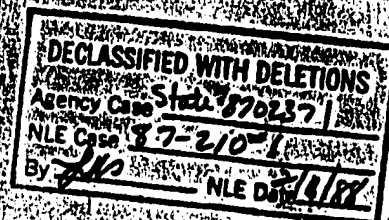
THINKING OUT LOUD  
BY  
JOHN FOSTER DULLES

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I am particularly concerned at the diagnosis of Western European public opinion. It indicates that this public opinion would not permit the governments to risk launching a land operation merely to keep open the Western access to Berlin.

Perhaps access as of right, rather than at GDR sufferance, seems a "minor" difference. But it is always possible for the Soviet Union to stage its demands and its probing so that each step seems a relatively little step and one for which it is not worthwhile to risk war. That of course means that the very great Soviet gains could be made merely by making them in stages and by degrees.

I wonder whether, if opinion is as represented, Western Europe is really defensible at all.



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The present suggestion relates to the abdication by the Soviet Union of its agreed responsibilities and substituting the GDR under conditions which would compel us, if we acquiesce, to deal with the GDR as a government. (I am not now speaking of possibly dealing with GDR officials as agents of the Soviet Union which would be quite a different matter.) Such acceptance of the GDR would greatly enhance its prestige and shore up the uncertain structure of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe. It would dismay and dishearten the population of Berlin and, I would assume, the large majority of the people of the Federal Republic. It would expose the lack of willpower in the Western alliance and encourage further pressures.



I do not believe that this can be treated as a relatively minor gain for the Soviet Union and only a minor loss to the Western world.

In my opinion the risk of war developing is minimized if the Soviet Union

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realizes that we are prepared to be strong and to exercise our rights.

I am convinced that the striking power of the United States constitutes a genuine and effective deterrent unless the Soviets would finally calculate that there is not the moral courage to use it when necessary. Another deterring consideration is that the Soviets would not want to stir up the situation in Eastern Europe, where disloyalty and disaffection are rampant.

Of course, no amount of power operates as a deterrent unless there is the will to use it when so compelled by the violation of our rights. So far as we are concerned, the will is present. If so far as Western Europe is concerned, the will is lacking, then I fear our entire NATO concept and US participation in it will require drastic review.

I would of course agree that there should be an avoidance of preliminary measures which might inaugurate a panic. On the other hand, if it is not possible in a serious situation to take reasonable

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preliminary measures without a panic starting, then we are in a bad position.

I note the suggestion that there is a tendency in Europe to think that the United States would like to see a "showdown" in Europe, from the hazards of which the United States would be immune. I also note that Mr. Lloyd is "not criticizing such a view if it has been expressed".

Of course the fact is, as Mr. Lloyd admits, that in the foreseeable future no aggressive despot is going to allow himself to become involved in a difficult and dangerous struggle in Europe while the power and resources of the United States remain intact. The Kaiser and Hitler did this, and paid the price. The obvious lesson has now been learned, and if the Soviets started a general European war, the United States would be hit first and hardest.

If a contrary view prevails in Europe, and if the Western European Governments are compelled to act on the assumption the

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United States wants to get them into a war on the theory that this country would be relatively immune, that again reveals a situation which gravely affects all our common thinking and planning for the security of Western Europe.



I would hope that in these matters the governments which know better would be able to give leadership, rather than be led by the people who you suggest hold false ideas. And, although I would not set my judgment against Mr. Lloyd's, I am not sure that the view is widely held in Europe that the United States is trying to provoke European war.

The United States has sent to Europe and maintained there a large part of its own military force, approximately 3 divisions, to say nothing of naval, air and logistic formations. The theory was to make it apparent to all, and not least of all to the people of Western Europe, that this time there could not be a European war without the United States being

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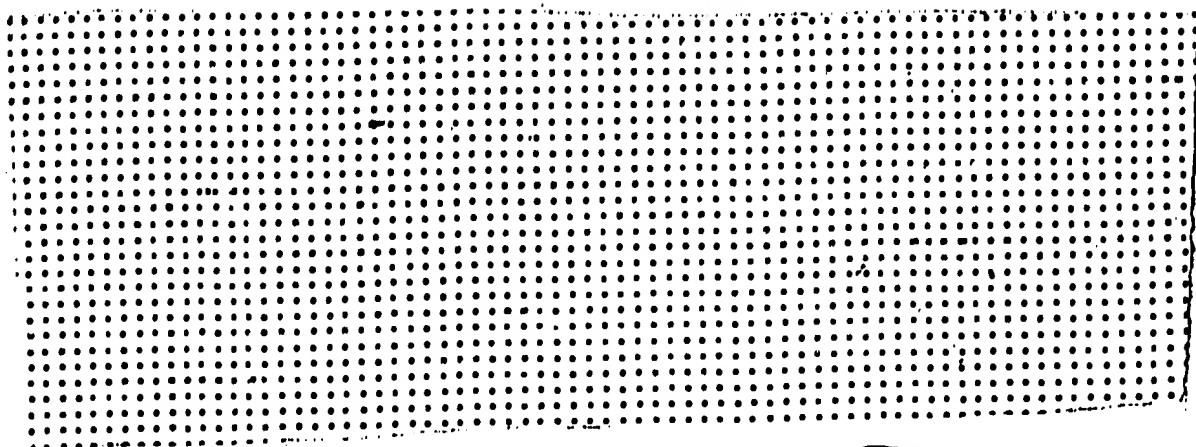
fully involved from the beginning. If our presence there does not serve that purpose, that again raises some questions for the future.

It seems to me that what the United States did with the United Kingdom in the Near East, and what the United States did in the Far East (Formosa), has served to demonstrate to all the world that the United States is not trying to assure that if war comes it will come in Europe, leaving us relatively immune. We are dedicated to peace, and to the conviction that there must be a steady and openly understood determination that as against the designs of International Communism and Soviet Imperialism, only a display of strength and firmness of will can possibly maintain the peace.





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